

TRAINING NOTES



New Infantry SQT Program

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Some changes are being made in infantry Skill Qualification Tests (SQTs) that will take advantage of the battle focus concept.

The intent of battle focus, which originated in Field Manual 25-100, is to test each soldier on his wartime-related job skills—the skills that are most closely related to his unit's mission essential tasks and equipment. Since the goal of battle focus is to develop SQTs that test tasks appropriate to each unit's METL, the Infantry School welcomes comments from the field as to which tasks should be added or deleted from the tests.

The big change in next year's SQT that will come from battle focus is more separate tests, because, with one exception, each infantry MOS (Military Occupational Specialty) will have two or three tracks for each skill level.

Under the current program, the tasks for testing are randomly selected from the Soldier's Manuals, and there is a single test for each skill level for MOSs 11B, 11C, and 11M. The 11H MOS has a separate test for Skill Levels 1 and 2, but not for Skill Levels 3 and 4.

Under the new program for Fiscal Year 1990, MOSs 11B, 11C, and 11H will be divided into tracks as follows:

- MOS 11B will have two tracks: Track 1 will include infantry, airborne,

air assault, or Ranger units. Track 2 will include units equipped with M113 armored personnel carriers.

- The 11C MOS tests will have three tracks: Track 1 will include 60mm mortar crewmen; Track 2, 81mm (M29A1/M252) mortar crewman; and Track 3, 4.2-inch mortar crewman.

- The 11H MOS test for Skill Levels 1 and 2 will still be broken down into Track 1, Heavy Antiarmor Weapons

Infantryman, and Track 2, Improved TOW Vehicle (ITV) Infantryman. For the FY 1990 test, however, Skill Levels 3 and 4 will also be broken down into the same two tracks.

The 11M MOS SQT, since it is based on a single weapon system, is already battle focused and will have only one test for each skill level.

Each test booklet for 1990 will contain all of the tracks for a given skill



level. The 11C Skill Level 1 test booklet, for example, will contain Tracks 1, 2, and 3. The test will begin with a common task section; then each 11C soldier will be directed to turn to a certain page to find the remaining questions for his track.

Soldiers should carefully study their SQT notices as soon as they arrive, as they will contain the exact list of tasks that will be tested. This is a major change from past years when the SQT notice contained additional tasks that were not tested.

Under this new system, it will be

important for each soldier to know in advance which track he will be tested on so he can study for it. Each unit commander, in coordination with the soldier and his first line supervisor, will select the test track the soldier is to follow.

In Fiscal Year 1990, the U.S. Army Training Support Center will further support SQT battle focus by allowing Reserve Component commanders to select the specific tasks that support their units' mission.

The infantry SQT test dates for FY 1990 are 1 March 1990 to 31 May 1990

for Active Army units and 1 March 1990 to 28 February 1991 for Reserve Components units.

Questions or concerns about the new SQT program may be directed to the Commandant, U.S. Army Infantry School, ATTN: ATSH-I-V-TM (Captain Chuber); AUTOVON 835-1670, commercial (404) 545-1670.

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IOBC

Training Infantry Platoon Leaders

MASTER SERGEANT CHARLES G. BEER

When I entered basic training in 1968 I had little or no knowledge of the Army and its military traditions. (I guess I had not watched enough war stories on television when I was growing up.) I wondered about one soldier walking around with a bar on his shirt. He was, I was later told, an officer and, in this case, the company commander.

Then I started thinking: "What type of training did this lieutenant have? Was it the same training I was going through?" Eventually, through my military career, these questions were answered for me, but today's young soldiers may also wonder from time to time about the qualifications of their officers.

First of all, on the basis of my experiences, I can say that our young officers are well-qualified and well-trained to be leaders. And, as a matter of fact, they do go through some of the

same training enlisted infantry soldiers go through.

For instance, newly commissioned officers attend a demanding course that trains them to be infantry platoon leaders—the Infantry Officer Basic Course (IOBC), which is run by the Infantry School at Fort Benning, Georgia.

HIGH LEVEL OF TRAINING

The Infantry Officer Basic Course assures the Army and the individual infantry soldier that all infantry lieutenants have had the same high level of training. It trains newly commissioned officers to be mentally tough, physically fit, confident, and technically and tactically skilled in infantry tasks.

All infantry lieutenants—Active Army, Army National Guard, and U.S. Army Reserve—take this course. These

officers have been commissioned through a variety of institutions and programs including the United States Military Academy, the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC), Federal or state officer candidate schools (OCSs), and direct commissioning.

My career has given me an insider's view of the training of platoon leaders. I had seven years of experience training cadets before I went to an IOBC training company. While there, I served as the first sergeant for Company A, 2d Battalion, 11th Infantry—one of five IOBC companies.

The company provides the officer-students with the experienced officer and noncommissioned officer leadership they need to make the most of their training. Commanded by a major, each company usually has four or five platoons with 40 to 45 officer-students each. At least two of the NCOs in each